Last Positoid Standing: RIP Mike DeStefano

March 8, 2011 By Shawn Decker

Former Poz columnist, comedian and HIV educator Mike DeStefano passed to spirit suddenly on Sunday due to a heart attack. A lot of folks got to know his humor via his Top 5 finish on last year's season of Last Comic Standing. I had the privilege of meeting "Mikey D" through educating about HIV- it's a small world when you wear your HIV status on your sleeve.

Since he wrote for POZ back in the day, I thought it would be good to share his first column for the magazine from 1998. He wrote about being a long-term nonprogressor, and jokes about how his smoking habit will probably get him before hiv (in the column he refused to capitalize "HIV", not wanting to give it that towering power):

"Still, what a pain in the ass this little piece of paper has been--the positive test result that has taken me through emotions I never even knew existed. And most frustrating of all, I know in my heart of hearts that because of these years of turmoil, I've become a pretty decent guy. It kills me to admit it, but somehow I needed this virus." - Mike DeStefano

The HIV community needed you, Mikey. Thank you for you honesty, sense of humor and passion for sharing your experiences living with HIV.

Positively Yours,
Shawn

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